

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 091446 Z MAY 73
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8656

S E C R E T ROME 3632

EXDIS

E. O. 11652 XGDS-1 DECLASS. IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE DATE. BY DCM
TAGS: PFOR US IT EG XF
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN VIEWS ON ITALIAN MID EAST PROPOSALS

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: EGYPTIAN EMBASSY OFFICER HAS ASKED ABOUT U. S. ATTITUDE TOWARD ITALIAN MID EAST PROPOSALS. HE INDICATED THAT EGYPTIANS SEE ITALIAN PLAN AS PRIMARILY SELF- SERVING, AND POSSIBLY INSPIRED BY U. S. AND/ OR ISRAELIS. EGYPTIANS APPEAR CONCERNED BY REPEATED MENTION OF ALLEGED ITALIAN PROPOSAL FOR SECOND SUEZ CANAL. RECENT MEDICI CONTACTS WITH ZAYYAT ABOUT ITALIAN PROPOSALS FOUND ZAYYAT " UNENTHUSIASTIC." END SUMMARY.

2. ON MAY 7 EGYPTIAN EMBASSY ROME OFFICER SOUGHT APPOINTMENT TO ASK ABOUT U. S. REACTION DURING ANDREOTTI VISIT TO WASHINGTON TO ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MEDICI' S MID EAST PROPOSALS. WE TOLD EGYPTIAN EMBOFF THAT ITALIAN PROPOSALS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON. WE OBSERVED THAT USG HAD ENCOURAGED OTHERS TO COME UP WITH CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS TO ASSIST IN REACHING MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, AND THAT ITALIAN PROPOSALS BEING VIEWED IN THAT LIGHT.

3. WE THEN ASKED FOR EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD MEDICI PROPOSALS. EGYPTIAN EMBOFF RESPONDED THAT MEDICI HAD OUTLINED HIS IDEAS DURING HIS FEBRUARY VISIT TO CAIRO, AND HAD RECEIVED POLITE HEARING. HOWEVER, EGYPTIANS SEE MANY FLAWS IN ITALIAN PROPOSALS, PRINCIPALLY THAT THEY MADE NO RPT NO MENTION OF OVERRIDING POLITICAL
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ISSUE AND EGYPTIAN REQUIREMENT, I. E., TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI TROOPS FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORY. EGYPTIAN EMBOFF ALSO NOTED THAT PROPOSALS HAD NOT RPT NOT BEEN DISCUSSED WITH SOVIETS, WHO CONTINUED TO BE AN IMPORTANT INTERESTED PARTY IN MIDDLE EAST SOLUTION. EGYPTIAN

EMBASSY OFFICER STATED IT WAS GOE BELIEF THAT ITALIAN PROPOSALS WERE MOTIVATED PRINCIPALLY BY SELF- INTEREST, I. E., ITALIAN DESIRE FOR REOPENING CANAL. HE INDICATED THAT EGYPTIANS, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT RPT NOT REJECT ANY AID WHICH MIGHT BE PRODUCED BY ITALIAN PLAN SHOULD IT EVER GET OFF THE GROUND. ON OTHER HAND, HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT ITALY WAS NOT RPT NOT INFLUENTIAL ENOUGH POWER TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR ITS PLAN.

4. THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION EGYPTIAN EMBOFF STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT GOE SUSPECTS THAT USG OR PERHAPS ISRAELIS HAD INSPIRED ITALIAN PROPOSALS. WE STATED THAT U. S. HAD PLAYED NO RPT NO ROLE IN FORMULATION OF ITALIAN PROPOSALS, AND EXPRESSED DOUBT RE ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT.

5. EGYPTIAN EMBOFF EXPRESSED PARTICULAR CONCERN THAT PROPOSAL FOR SECOND SUEZ CANAL ATTRIBUTED TO PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI WAS PART OF ITALIAN MID EAST PLAN. HE NOTED THAT DESPITE CATEGORIC ITALIAN DENIALS, ANDREOTTI HAD MENTIONED SECOND CANAL AGAIN DURING MAY 6 SPEECH IN SICILY (SEPTEL). HE SAID THAT EGYPTIANS INTEND TO QUERY ITALINS ON THIS SUBJECT, AND AGAIN INDICATED EGYPTIAN SUSPECIONS THAT U. S. OR ISRAELIS BEHIND SECOND CANAL PROPOSAL. WE RESPONDED THAT AS HAS BEEN PUBLICLY STATED BY USG, SECOND CANAL IDEA DID NOT RPT NOT COME UP DURING ANDREOTTI VISIT TO WASHINGTON, AND WE DENIED ANY U. S. INSPIRATION OF IDEA.

6. ON MAY 8 WE ASKED RESPONSIBLE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL FOR ITALIAN APPRECIATION OF EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD MEDICI' S MID EAST PROPOSALS. OFFICIAL REPLIED THAT MEDICI HAD OUTLINED HIS IDEAS TO FORMER PRIME MINISTER SIDQI DURING FEBRUARY VISIT TO CAIRO, AND HAD RECEIVED POLITE HEARING. OFFICIAL REMARKED THAT SIDQI NOW OUT OF POWER. HE SAID THAT MOST RECENT ITALIAN/ EGYPTIAN HIGH LEVEL CONTACT HAD BEEN IN LATE APRIL WHEN FOREIGN M

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